Past Pursuits

A Newsletter of the Special Collections Division of the Akron-Summit County Public Library

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The Great Flood of 1913

by Rebecca Larson-Troyer, Librarian

Buildings on East North Street wrecked by the Flood of 1913. From the Summit County Historical Society's Pockrandt Collection.

A century ago, Ohioans endured what is generally held to be the worst disaster in the state's history. The Great Flood of 1913 devastated parts of Ohio as flood waters overtook entire communities and resulted in monumental losses throughout the state. The massive flood claimed more than 400 lives statewide and left thousands homeless, dispossessed by a torrent that ripped houses from their foundations and carried away nearly everything in its path. The disaster would prove a catalyst for change, as those who experienced the Great Flood resolved to prevent any such disaster from ravaging the state again.

In 1913, a snowy January and February gave way to an early thaw and heavy, unrelenting rains. The rains began on March 23, Easter Sunday, and continued for five days. Rainwater ran over ground still hardened from winter, coursing into lakes, rivers and streams and setting the stage for disaster. Between 8 and 11 inches fell in parts of the state, overwhelming waterways and causing dams and levees from Cleveland to Cincinnati to burst under the extreme pressure. Every waterway in Ohio reached higher than normal levels, many spilling over into the communities constructed along their banks. Ohio's river cities bore the brunt of the flood's force. Columbus, Marietta and Zanesville found entire sections submerged in icy waters. Dayton by far suffered the greatest. Located at the confluence of the Great Miami,

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the Mad and the Stillwater Rivers, Dayton was no stranger to flooding. The flood waters of 1913, however, decimated the city's levees and water levels rose to 20 feet in parts of downtown. Ruptured gas lines ignited fires that burned freely through businesses, factories and homes. In Dayton alone the combined effect of the flood and subsequent fires destroyed thousands of homes and claimed the lives of as many as 300 people.

Though the destruction in Dayton was unmatched by any single community, the rains wreaked havoc and displaced thousands throughout the state. The historic waterway that had once transformed Ohio from frontier wilderness to trade capital, the Ohio & Erie Canal, surged through its trenches. Debris jammed points along the length of the canal as water and wreckage invaded from nearby rivers and lakes already overrun. Some canal locks were washed away entirely in the deluge, while others were unceremoniously dynamited to lower water levels and save the communities the canals once helped to build.

The March rains of 1913 brought an immediate end to shipping on the Ohio & Erie Canal. Transport along the canals had decreased in the decades prior to the Great Flood but had never entirely ceased. Though railroads crisscrossed the nation, the canal provided a ready means of shipping for merchants positioned along its route and an essential source of water for nearby industries. The canals had still been relevant enough in 1911 to prompt a restoration plan aimed at returning Ohio's deteriorated network of waterways to "first-class condition." Improvements were made in several locations, including Akron, and in some cases just months prior to the Great Flood. Despite renewed interest in the canals just two years earlier, the damage from the flood proved too great. State officials decided the canals would be abandoned, bringing a close to an important era in Ohio history.

In Akron, a city that owed its early success to the canals, the rains of 1913 spelled serious trouble. Rainfall at Buchtel College measured 9.65 inches in less than four days, more than double the record to date. Flood waters rose as deep as ten feet along some Akron streets, and a March 27, 1913, *Akron Beacon Journal* headline warned the "Ohio Flood Grows Worse Each Minute." Nearby, the Portage Lakes flowed uncontrollably into the Tuscarawas River and caused flooding in the communities along its banks. The East Reservoir dam collapsed, dumping its contents into adjacent waters and causing some area residents to accuse others of blasting the dam to save their properties. Southeast of Akron, Fritch Lake (later renamed Wingfoot Lake) spilled over into the Little Cuyahoga, already swelled to a raging torrent winding its way through East Akron.

Water surging through East North Street carved a channel six feet deep, and similar circumstances along West Market caused a section of the Alexander Building to collapse. The Lods Street district, which had been created by diverting the Little Cuyahoga's flow to expose land for development, was overrun as the river reclaimed its natural route. The force of the flood waters washed away homes and left others standing partially submerged. Police and fire departments evacuated residents in affected areas and worked to rescue the stranded, many of whom had sought shelter on upper stories and rooftops. Officers were reported to have woken residents to alert them of dangerous flooding, some of whom slept as their homes filled with water. Despite these efforts, several locals would perish before the waters receded.

The Great Flood entirely disrupted life in the city. The Northern Ohio Traction & Light Company suffered extensive losses, with tracks ripped out, electrical lines downed and bridges destroyed or washed away. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company experienced the greatest damage to a local industry during the flood, halting operations and laying off workers. One Goodyear building had taken on as much as eight feet of water, with workmen only narrowly escaping the rising waters. Machinery stood submerged, and the stock of raw materials in waterlogged storerooms was a total loss. Hampered by flooding, the *Akron Beacon Journal* apologized to readers for publishing an "abbreviated" issue in time of crisis. With lights out throughout the city, a power plant was reportedly improvised using motorcycles

to power a typesetting machine. Readers were asked to "overlook the manifest weakness of [the] issue and accept it as the best that was possible under the circumstances."

After days of uninterrupted downpour, the rains subsided, and receding flood waters exposed the damage. Debris lay strewn throughout the city, and streets that had not washed away were buried under a foot or more of sediment. Homes stood shifted and sodden. Groups like the Salvation Army and the Charity Organization coordinated relief efforts to provide necessary resources and shelter to those displaced by the flood. Local businesses also aided the cause, offering financial assistance and storage space for food and goods to be distributed to victims.

Photographs of the aftermath show sections of the city almost unrecognizable under several feet of water. Cars of the Belt Line and Baltimore & Ohio railroads sat idle and partially submerged, and the county fairgrounds lay entirely underwater. Residents stared at the still gushing river and canal with expressions that seem a mix of horror, awe and utter exhaustion.

Throughout the state, the flood caused millions of dollars worth of damage, destroying more than twenty thousand homes and claiming at least 428 lives. Ohio's canals were destroyed and ultimately abandoned, but the rebuilding of communities began almost immediately. In regions most devastated by the flood, measures to prevent future disasters of this scale were at the forefront of discussion. The 1914 Ohio Conservancy Law authorized the state to designate watershed districts and tax residents to generate the funds for necessary improvements to these areas. In southwestern Ohio where losses were greatest, the Miami Conservancy District formed to develop a flood protection system that has been in place since 1922. A similar system of dams and reservoirs in the Muskingum Conservancy District, developed during the 1930s, covers twenty percent of the state and protects the region from south of Akron to Marietta. These efforts taken in response to the flood have prevented a repeat disaster of this magnitude over the past century.

The effects of the Flood of 1913 on Case Avenue. From the Summit County Historical Society's Pockrandt Collection.

The events of the Great Flood have been recorded in the local histories of countless communities throughout the state. The photographs and memories collected from those who experienced the flood firsthand remain today, reminding us of the significance of this event. These accounts tell an important story, one that is sure to be of great interest as we approach the 100th anniversary of the greatest disaster in Ohio history, the Great Flood of 1913.

On Display: Taken at the Flood

The Great Flood of 1913 impacted nearly every part of Ohio and much of the region beyond. 100 years later, Ohio's greatest natural disaster is remembered in the Special Collections exhibit, *Taken at the Flood.* On display March through May, this new exhibit will recount the local and regional impact of the Great Flood through photographs, news reports and the stories of those who experienced nature's fury firsthand.

A Tallmadge Family on the Frontier: The Letters of Mary Wright Edgerton

by Judy James, Division Manager

Mary Wright's childhood was fairly typical for a young woman growing up in the early Western Reserve of Ohio. One of twelve children of native New Englanders Alpha and Lucy Foster Wright, Mary was born in Tallmadge in 1827. Her father was a prosperous farmer, and they lived in a large and comfortable home in Tallmadge. She attended school in Tallmadge and later at Oberlin College. Her life of comfort and civility would change dramatically, however, with her marriage to Sidney Edgerton, a young law student living and working in Akron. Also of New England stock, Sidney moved to Akron in 1844. He worked for prominent attorney Rufus Spaulding and taught at the Tallmadge Academy, where he met Mary. In 1845 he entered the Cincinnati Law School, and upon graduating in 1846, returned to Akron, started a law practice and began a courtship with her. According to Summit County Marriage records, they were married May 18, 1849.

An able and ambitious young man, Sidney rose through the political ranks quickly. In 1848 he served as a delegate to the convention of the Free Soil Party, an independent political party that opposed slavery in the western territories. He served as Akron's Prosecuting Attorney from 1852-1856. In 1858 he was elected to Congress where he served for four years. In 1863, at the end of his second term, President Abraham Lincoln appointed Sidney as Chief Justice of the newly created territory of Idaho which covered most of present day Idaho, Montana and Wyoming. In 1865 he was appointed Governor of the Montana Territory. Lewis and Clark County was originally named Edgerton County, but the name was changed in 1868 to honor the explorers who had traversed it twice.

Sidney's rapid rise from Akron lawyer to territory governor would significantly change the life of his wife Mary. For two years she lived on the western frontier, running a household and raising children in a log cabin without the domestic help she was accustomed to. She also left behind friends and a devoted family, including her twin sister and confidant, Martha Carter, with whom she corresponded. Although she wrote to several members of her family including her mother Lucy and sister Lucy Ann Shaw, most letters were sent to Martha. Found years later scattered on the attic floor of the Edgerton home at 116 South Walnut Street in Akron, they were donated by the family in 1962 to the Montana Historical Society. Many of these letters, from June 1863 to August 1865, may be found in *A Governor's Wife on the Mining Frontier: the Letters of Mary Edgerton from Montana, 1863-1865* edited by James L. Thane, Jr. and published in 1976 by the University of Utah Library. Special Collections owns a copy of Mr. Thane's book, and it may also be read online via the University of Utah's J. Willard Marriott Library.

Mary Wright Edgerton
Image reprinted with permission from
Special Collections Dept.
J. Willard Marriott Library
University of Utah

Mary's letters home document the trip from Tallmadge to Idaho and ultimately to Bannack, Montana, a rustic town with few women and fewer "respectable" women. Through her letters we learn of the difficulties and hardships endured by pioneers,

especially women, who moved west as our country expanded. Mary's letters are complemented by the author's narrative, which provides historical context for the time and circumstances of Mary's and Sidney's lives.

Mary and Sidney departed Tallmadge by carriage on June 1, 1863. Along with them were several acquaintances and relatives, including their children, Mattie, Wright, Sidney, and Pauline, who would later serve for more than 30 years as the head of the Akron Public Library. From Cuyahoga Falls, they took a train to Cleveland, a boat to Detroit, a train to Missouri, and a steamboat to Omaha. This was a departure point for many who were traveling west to seek their fortunes or claim land. It was here that the Edgerton party purchased wagons, oxen, and supplies for their journey. On June 10, Mary wrote an optimistic first letter home to her sister Martha, describing their journey to that point: "We were on the river two days and night…the boat was new and everything was neat and clean and our living was of the very best….It is a pity that we did not bring Blackie with us to take over the plains for cats sell at ten dollars apiece. We might make a small fortune if we could take enough cats with us."

On June 16, they set off on the Overland Trail. Their progress was slow, with an average of about ten miles per day. In her letters home, Mary describes the terrain and weather they encountered, with particular attention paid to the flowers and plants she had not seen before. On August 18 the party reached Bannack, a newly-established gold mining town of about 500 residents. Today, it is a ghost town.

Two months after arriving Sidney purchased a log home, which Mary describes in letters sent to her mother in October of that year: "Mr. Edgerton has bought a very good log house for four hundred dollars. There was only one large room that had been used as a store, and a good kitchen…there are good board floors. Many of the houses have floors made of made of hides…many have no floors. We have not got our house finished yet, but hope to soon. I have made my rag carpet and as soon as we can have a fireplace and chimney built, shall put it down on our front room."

Subsequent letters to her mother and sister include requests for various sundries, clothing and other items either not available in Bannack or very expensive to purchase there. She asked for sugar, tea, dried fruit, fabric, thread, and dresses "suitable for every day wear" because "anything nice I would never wear here." In one letter she requests, "now this next that I write don't read out loud to anyone. If you should send any crockery, don't forget chamber furniture."

The Idaho territory was lawless, generating a movement among some residents for the creation of a new territory from the eastern portion. Sidney returned to Washington, D.C. to lobby for this cause. His successful efforts led to the creation of the Montana Territory in May 1864. He was appointed governor that same month. When he left for Washington in January 1864, Mary was pregnant. He did not return until mid-summer, after their daughter and sixth child, Idaho, was born. Mary's letters home reflect that she missed him and was a bit annoyed regarding his lack of communication: "I hope that I shall hear from Mr. Edgerton. You don't know how long the time has seemed since he went away. I have not heard from him but once. I wish he was here now, for I need his advice about many things."

Sidney, Mary, and their children remained in Montana until September 1865, when Sidney resigned from his position due to complicated political circumstances. The family returned to Akron, where Mary and Sidney lived for the remainder of their lives. Mary died in 1884 and Sidney followed in 1900. Both are buried at Tallmadge Cemetery.

In addition to this book of letters, the library also has a copy of *Memories of a Long Life,* her sister Martha Plassman's memoir. It is a detailed and candid account of her youth and later life as a journalist, political activist and businesswoman in Montana, where she lived for most of her adult life. Although the Edgerton Family Papers are maintained by the Montana Historical Society, a collection of letters

from Mary to Sidney is also held by Archival Services of the University of Akron.

The Edgerton family holds an important place in Summit County history. In addition to Sidney's accomplishments, several other family members contributed to our community and our country. Although much has been written about Sidney, it is Mary's letters that give us an intimate glimpse of the family's daily life, struggles and joys. Although the art and custom of letter and diary writing continue to decline in our world, it is refreshing and enlightening to be invited into hers.

What Makes Special Collections So Special?

by Mary Plazo, Librarian

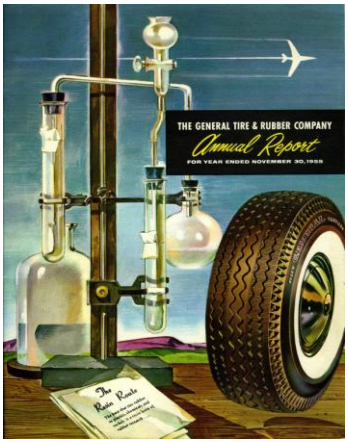
Many of you know that the Special Collections Division is not only about genealogy research but also about local history research. We have many archival collections from a wide range of local organizations and businesses throughout Summit County. To see a list of the collections we have processed so far, click on the "Local History" tab at the top of our Web site and click on "Archival collections."

One of the latest collections we've processed is the Beth El Congregation Collection. This collection contains materials from approximately 1950-2011, including photographs of graduation and confirmation classes, special events, scrapbooks, meeting minutes, programs and more. Beth El Congregation officially began in 1946 at the site of the Akron Jewish Center. The new congregation later dedicated their own building in 1951 on South Hawkins Street in Akron, but moved again in 2012 to their current location at the Shaw Jewish Community Center.

Another collection we've recently added is the WITAN (Women In Touch With Akron's Needs) Collection. This collection contains scrapbooks, newsletters, items from special events, news clippings, photographs and audio visual materials. The organization was started in 1943 by seven Akron women with a mission to educate members of the community about civic responsibility, to promote volunteerism and to support projects that fulfill a need in the community however possible.

Construction of the Beth El Synagogue near completion, about 1951. From the Beth El Congregation Collection.

These archival collections are only two of the many collections we house along with individual rare items we receive on a regular basis. For example, if you search our Local History Database, you may stumble upon such historic gems as a Greensburg School program from 1884 or a directory of the Akron Women's City Club from 1960. We even have the *Akron Flying Saucer Investigation Committee Bulletin* from 1976-1987. Also in the collections are individual programs, brochures and other items from churches, schools, city events, early Akron businesses and much more. All of these items may be viewed in Special Collections upon request.



This annual report for General Tire is part of a larger collection of annual reports for the company covering 1937 – 1981.

Historic Map Works Database

by Cheri Goldner, Librarian

Special Collections is pleased to announce the addition of Historic Map Works Library Edition to our selection of research databases. This database may be accessed either from within the library or remotely by visiting www.akronlibrary.org/databases.

Historic Map Works currently contains more than 1.5 million maps and illustrations and more than 28,000 atlases from the United States, including many cadastral (land ownership) maps. Also included are more than 40,000 antiquarian international maps and directories. Users may browse by location or search in a variety of ways.

To browse by location, click the Browse button in the navigation bar at the top of the screen, then use the map to select first the continent and then the specific area in which you are interested. When viewing the list of maps for a selected area, special symbols indicate atlases with illustrations and those that may be found by an address search. An additional feature is the capability to overlay maps onto a modern map or satellite image using the Historic Earth viewer. The main Browse page also includes a link at the bottom of the screen to a detailed list of maps in the collection that indicates how many atlases and maps are available for each area.

The database provides seven different search options: Keyword, Advanced, Address, GPS, Town & City, Illustrations and Directories. All of these options are available by clicking on the Search button in the navigation bar at the top of the screen. Keyword searching is also available on every page of the site by using the search box in the navigation bar.

A Help button in the navigation bar leads to details on how to browse and search. The quality of the images is excellent (in some cases, much better than our print atlases), and buttons above images allow for printing, saving or cropping. With so many features in this unique database, researchers are bound to discover something new. If you have any questions about using the database, please contact us.

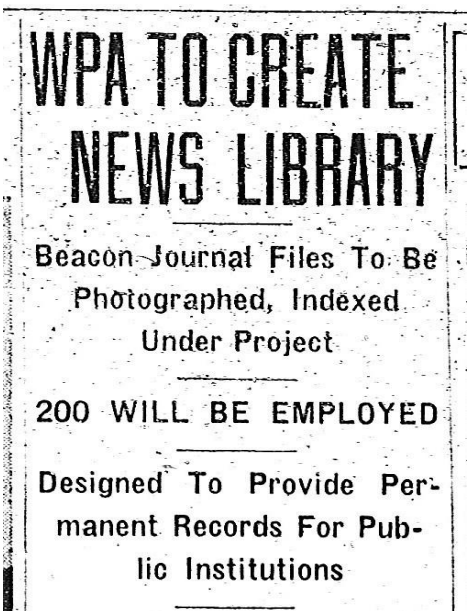
The *Akron Beacon Journal* Index, 1841 - 1939

by Jane Gramlich, Librarian

Perhaps the best single resource for Summit County's 20th century history is its newspapers. Although there are scattered published works about some aspects of the county and its people since 1900, there's been no general historical work produced since 1952, with Karl H. Grismer's *Akron and Summit County*. But take a look at any issue of a 20th century Summit County newspaper. The *Akron Beacon Journal* wasn't the only one; until 1938, there were others such as the *Akron Times* and *Akron Press*. In all of these newspapers you'll find accounts of politics and government, businesses, social institutions, residents and random happenings that can't be found anywhere else. We owe a great deal to journalists for recording the passing scene.

Because newspapers are printed on highly acidic paper, they turn yellow and crumble very quickly. For libraries, keeping stacks of loose print issues isn't the best option. You might find old local newspapers bound in book form in some libraries and archives, but you're more likely to find them on microfilm, where each individual page was photographed and developed on a length of film similar to what was used in movie projectors. For

decades, microfilming newspapers has preserved the content and kept storage needs to a minimum. Viewing the newspapers on microfilm readers isn't hard with a bit of practice. But how does a researcher find the information he or she is looking for? Often that's the more difficult task. If there's no index of names and subjects pointing to a specific issue date and page number, you'd need to know at least an approximate date of an article. Otherwise you're stuck searching through countless pages and issues. For example, if you think an article appeared sometime in 1948 but you're not sure of the month, looking for it on microfilm would be the same as looking at that entire year of print issues page by page.



WPA TO CREATE NEWS LIBRARY

Beacon Journal Files To Be Photographed, Indexed Under Project

200 WILL BE EMPLOYED

Designed To Provide Permanent Records For Public Institutions

Akron Beacon Journal, *October 6, 1938*

The Works Progress Administration (WPA), a federal government program designed to put unemployed people to work in various capacities, was formed during the Great Depression. Among the WPA's projects were valuable cultural initiatives aimed at preserving history, such as inventorying county archives. Recognizing the need for newspaper filming and indexing, the WPA created programs to accomplish this task. Akron's certainly wasn't the only one. Five other cities in Ohio participated, and there were similar projects in locations all throughout the United States.

The result of the *Akron Beacon Journal* project was a multi-volume work covering the paper from 1841 until 1939. Special Collections has the index in print, on microfilm and in digital form through our Web site. It's not a perfect index; no index is without mistakes. But it's much better than nothing. If you need to learn about Akron's canals in the 1870s for a school paper or if your ancestors were the subject of a newsworthy event, this index will help.

Today, digitization can make full page images of historic newspapers available and searchable with a few clicks of a mouse button. Take a look at our database Access NewspaperArchive and the Library of Congress' Chronicling America project for excellent examples. We're hoping that soon, the *Akron Beacon Journal* will be digitized with full page images and high search capabilities. Newspaper digitization programs are growing as funding becomes available, so perhaps it's only a matter of time. We can only imagine the treasure trove of local history and genealogy that will open up to us when all of our local newspapers appear in searchable digital image form. In the meantime, we have the *Akron Beacon Journal* index to help us find and understand the people and events that have shaped the history of our area.

WPA employees indexing the Akron Beacon Journal. *From the Summit County Historical Society's Pockrandt Collection.*

Serendipity Strikes Again

by Jane Gramlich, Librarian

Reprinted from Footsteps to the Past, *the newsletter of the Cuyahoga Valley Genealogical Society.*

If you research family history long enough, you're likely to encounter one of those sudden unexpected finds or odd coincidences that genealogists often call "serendipity." They make some of us wonder if there's something a bit supernatural going on, as if our ancestors are quietly guiding us from beyond, helping us find them. There's a lot of discussion about these experiences, and the book *Psychic Roots* is full of anecdotal examples. I try to keep a healthy skepticism, but I've had enough of these occurrences to make me think twice. Just a few weeks ago, it happened again.

On a trip that was half vacation and half research, I visited the Eastern Townships of the province of Québec. This area was settled by New England loyalists who fled the newly formed United States after the Revolutionary War. I'm pretty certain my ancestors were among them. My primary quest was to find Maple Leaf Cemetery in Compton County, where my fourth great-grandparents, Daniel and Polly Otis Sunbury, are buried. I knew the location of the cemetery and knew I wouldn't have too much trouble finding it, especially with my skilled navigator husband in the passenger seat.

What I hadn't bothered to do ahead of time was figure out the location of Eaton Corner Congregational Church, where Daniel and Polly's daughter, my third great-grandmother Alnetta Sunbury, was married. The church still stands, although it's now a local history museum for Compton County. Checking for a Web site, at least, before I left would have helped. Somehow that escaped me. I did have a photo of the building sent by a distant cousin, so I knew what it looked like. But driving around the back roads, little hamlets and farmland of Compton County, I really had no idea where it was. Road work detours and slightly confusing place names didn't help the issue. I had about given up when it seemed to appear at a crossroads out of nowhere.

We got out of the car and walked up to the building to take a closer look. While we were reading a plaque about its history placed near the door, I noticed a woman approaching from across the street. Nobody else was around. She greeted us and told us she was with the museum; the building across the street was part of it. Her name was Sharon. "I'm sorry, but we're not open right now. We're closed for the season," she said.

"I'm here because my third great-grandparents were married here in 1848," I explained, feeling a bit sheepish. When you say things like that to a total stranger, you never know what kind of response you'll get. But she smiled with pleasant surprise and didn't look at me like I had three heads, so I knew she understood genealogy. "What were their names?" she asked. When I told her, she perked up in instant recognition. "Oh, yes, the Sunburys were well known around here," she said. "I can open this up for a little bit and show you the inside if you'd like." Would I!

Although the inside had been altered, I could still get a sense of how it looked as a church. It was amazing to think my ancestors had stood right within these walls, and now I was too. I chatted with Sharon, and she showed me a map of the cemetery that indicated where Daniel and Polly's stone could be found. There was a portrait of Russell Sunbury, Alnetta's brother, on the wall. He'd made a bit of a name for himself there, probably not too difficult in Eaton Corner. What great finds these were. Then it hit me. "Did you come out because you saw us here?" I asked Sharon.

"No, I was just on my way home," she said. We both thought for a second. If she hadn't appeared just as we were standing at the museum door, I certainly wouldn't have been able to see all this, not on that day anyway. We agreed that fate, or *something* anyway, was afoot.

From there, the cemetery wasn't hard to find. It was a beautiful blue-sky sunny day, about the best weather we had on the trip. The photo of the headstone couldn't have turned out better. There was even a little cemetery guestbook squirreled away in a

covered alcove, which I signed with a sense of satisfaction that any genealogist will recognize: I made it. I finally got here.

The headstone for Daniel and Polly Sunbury at Maple Leaf Cemetery. Photo by Jane Gramlich.

Of course, that was the easy part. When I crossed the border into Vermont to research a completely different set of ancestors, events did not conspire to go my way. Despite my best efforts and the help of exceptionally friendly volunteers at three historical societies, absolutely nothing turned up to show my forebears' presence where the family story says they were. All I have is a disorganized army of people with the same last names that they might be related to. There are lots of clues and plenty of other records to try, but it could take some good old-fashioned cluster genealogy techniques to sort it all out. If these elusive ancestors want me to find them here, they're going to make me work for it.

It's a terrible pun, but genealogy truly is all relative. Serendipity with one branch, brick walls with another. Who knows? I can't pretend to understand the mysteries of the universe. Maybe finding the Eaton Corner Congregational Church and being able to see the inside of it was just a random event. Maybe there was no rhyme or reason to it at all. But maybe it really was the gentle ghostly nudge of Great-Grandma Alnetta. I'm not ruling it out.

Anniversary for Local Mayflower Society

by Judy James, Division Manager

Eighty-five years ago, fifteen Summit County residents submitted a petition to the Society of Mayflower Descendants in the State of Ohio for the creation of an Akron colony. On June 28, 1927, the charter was finalized for the Western Reserve Colony of Mayflower Descendants, now the oldest continually active colony in existence, and the largest in Ohio. On November 10 and 11, 2012, the Colony celebrated its history and Compact Day with a weekend of activities culminating in a luncheon for current members and guests. Honored guest and General Society of Mayflower Descendants Governor General Bruce C. MacGunnigle presented the fascinating stories of three Mayflower pilgrims.

The Western Reserve Colony continues to serve our community with educational programs and donations of research materials to public libraries. Many of the Mayflower genealogy books maintained by Special Collections have been donated over the years by the Colony, including the *Mayflower Families through Five Generations* series, or what are commonly referred to as the "silver books." These books document the lives and descendants of the original pilgrims and are considered to be the definitive source for accurate information. The Society updates these volumes on an ongoing basis. At the Western Reserve Compact Day event, the Akron-Summit County Public Library received a letter of commitment stating that the Colony would donate updated volumes to the library, as they become available. In addition, it was announced that the Colony donated multiple copies of the children's book *The Mighty Mastiff of the Mayflower* by Peter Arenstam to libraries in its region. We are most grateful to the Western Reserve Colony of Mayflower Descendants for their continued commitment to scholarship about the Mayflower and for its generous donations over the years. Congratulations to the Colony, and best wishes for many fruitful years ahead.

Late Night at the Library a Success

The eighth annual Late Night at the Library proved once again that research can indeed be fun. More than 80 people attended this year's very successful event, mingling with their fellow family historians and enjoying free parking, tours, classes, refreshments and unlimited copies. Attendees also had the opportunity to sign up for a free online course with the National Institute for Genealogical Studies, regularly priced at $49.50.

Special thanks go out to the Summit County Chapter of the Ohio Genealogical Society, Judy Jennings of the Cuyahoga Portage Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and Sharon Myers of the William Wetmore Chapter Daughters of 1812. In the words of one attendee, "Thanks for a great event—can't wait for next year!"

Reminder: Ordering Microfilm from the Family History Library

As an affiliate library of the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah, Special Collections has the ability to borrow microfilmed records and books from this repository for our researchers. Now that they have streamlined their borrowing process, you can order microfilm directly from their online catalog, pay for your loan in advance and have it sent straight to Special Collections. Search their catalog at https://familysearch.org/ to find records you may be interested in viewing for your research. You will need to register for a free account. When you find the film you are looking for, you will be able to click on a catalog film number that will link you to the page you need to complete your order. The cost is $7.50 per film for 90 days, which includes shipping time, but you will also find longer term loan rates available on the order form.

Special Collections Class Schedule January – March 2013

For more information and to sign up, contact us at 330.643.9030 or speccollections@akronlibrary.org.

Getting Started in Family History
Saturday, January 12, 10 am – noon
Saturday, March 9, 10 am – noon
Are you interested in discovering your family's history or tracing your ancestors? The Special Collections Division is pleased to offer orientation sessions for new family historians. Each session will include an overview of the genealogical resources available at the Akron-Summit County Public Library, suggestions for getting started and tips for organizing your research. These sessions are held in meeting room 2AB, High Street level, Main Library.

Branching Out: Second Steps in Genealogy Research
Saturday, January 26, 10 am - noon
A more detailed continuation of Getting Started in Family History, this class is geared toward those who have already taken Getting Started or have done some research on their own. Participants will learn what to expect when working with vital records and obituaries and basic search strategies for finding them in both online and traditional sources. This class meets in Meeting Room 2AB, High Street level, Main Library.

Using Ancestry in Your Genealogy Research
Saturday, February 9, 10 am - noon
With more than 8,000 databases and 200 billion images, Ancestry is the premier online genealogy resource, and it's available to you free within any ASCPL location. This workshop will introduce you to the many features of Ancestry Library Edition and show you how to do efficient and effective searches. Because electronic resources are used, basic computer skills are recommended. This workshop meets in Computer Lab 2, first floor, Main Library.

Getting Started in African American Genealogy
Saturday, February 23, 10 am - noon
Do you want to trace your African American family tree? Not sure how or where to begin? The Special Collections Division presents a two-hour class for genealogy beginners who have a specific interest in African American ancestral research. This class meets in Meeting Room 2AB, High Street level, Main Library.

Finding Your Immigrant Ancestors
Saturday, March 23, 10 am - noon
Most of us will find immigrant ancestors somewhere in our family tree. Their travels to the United States and along the path to U.S. citizenship are often documented, but finding these records is sometimes a challenge. Join staff from the Special Collections Division for a discussion of identifying immigrant ancestors and locating passenger lists and naturalization records. As we will be using electronic resources, basic computer skills are recommended. This class meets in Computer Lab 2, first floor, Main Library.

Summit County OGS Events January – March 2013

For more information, please see http://www.summitogs.org/events.php.

Using Family Search to Enhance Local Chapter Exposure and Other Improvements
Presented by Dr. Joseph Heer
Saturday, January 19, 1 pm – 3 pm
Join Dr. Joseph Heer, Director of the Chillicothe LDS Family Search Center, as he discusses how Family Search can be used to find and save primary source records and pedigrees, collaborate with others working on your family lines, access the LDS Family History Library resources in Salt Lake City and promote and grow your local chapter. Dr. Heer has 25 years experience using computer tools for genealogical research.

What If You Have Native American Ancestors? What Resources Are Available?
Presented by Ms. Tammy Fuchs
Saturday, February 16, 1 pm – 3 pm
Join Ms. Tammy Fuchs as she discusses her results in researching her Native American Cherokee ancestry. Ms. Fuchs is a descendant of the Cherokee and Choctaw Nation. She has done extensive research on these as well as other Native American tribes. She has written a book regarding her findings which was reviewed by *Cherokee One Feather*, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians newspaper.

Brick Wall Discussion - Even More Problem Solving
Saturday, March 16, 1 pm – 3 pm
Not sure where to look next? Staring at brick walls? We'll share some methodology tips to help move forward. Bring a problem or question; we'll have an open discussion to address specific problems.

We would like to thank the following for their generous donations:

Patrica Hutz Bair for two binders of historical materials about the students and teachers of North High School's class of 1947.

Cuyahoga Portage Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution for *Thirty Perry County, Pennsylvania Cemeteries* by Bob and Mary Closson and *Along the Monongahela* by William Garbarino.

Great Plains Welsh Heritage Project for *Hanes Cymry America: A History of the Welsh in America* by R.D. Thomas; *History of the Welsh Church in Jackson, Ohio* by Evan O. Roberts; *Early History of the Welsh in the Proscairon District of Wisconsin* by Daniel Williams; *A History of the Calvinistic Methodists in Utica, New York* by T. Solomon Griffiths.

Delores Jones for *The Woodville Republican, Volume 5; Madison County, Mississippi; A History Lover's Guide to Mississippi* by Mary Ann Wells; *How to Trace Your African-American Roots* by Barbara Howell; *Selected Final Pension Payment Vouchers, 1818-64, Mississippi: Natchez and Jackson* by Alycon Trubey.

David Lieberth for two children's books published by the Saalfield Publishing Company.

Gretchen Mettler for twelve Firestone High School yearbooks, one Old Trail yearbook and Buchtel and Central High School reunion books.

The Public Library of Steubenville and Jefferson County, Ohio, for two historical brochures published by the Akron Chamber of Commerce.

Dan Steffens for thirty-six historic photographs of Akron, Ohio.

Summit County Chapter, Ohio Genealogical Society for *Fairfield County, Ohio Birth Records, 1899-1908* in memory of Thelma R. Huhn; *1883 Military Pensioners: Updated Index of Northwest Ohio*.

Turkeyfoot Island LLC for historical documents, records, and photographs about Turkeyfoot Island, Portage Lakes and the Frank Lahm family.

New to the Collection

Georgia

Cemeteries of Calhoun County
Dougherty County cemeteries, Books 1 & 2

Kentucky

Green County will records: Book IV, 1875-1913
Green County will book I with inventories, 1795-1816; will book II, 1836-1837; inventory II, 1812-1820
Meade County school census, 1894-95, 1897-1898
Nelson County school census, 1894-1895, 1895-1896

Massachusetts

Baptisms of St. Joseph Catholic Church, Attleboro, 1905-1986
Burials of Sacred Heart Catholic Church, North Attleborough [sic], 1904-1990
Burials of St. Joseph Catholic Church, Attleboro, 1905-1986
Burials of the Courchesne Funeral Home, Worcester, 1930-1938
Burials of the Lamoureux Funeral Home, New Bedford, 1930-1980
Marriages and baptisms of St. Michael Catholic Church, Swansea, 1922-1995
Marriages of St. Joseph Catholic Church, Attleboro, 1905-1986
Marriages of Saint Paul Catholic Church, Blackstone, 1852-1995
Marriages of St. Stephen Catholic Church, Attleboro, 1880-1986
Tombstones of Sussex County

Michigan

Blood Cemetery, 2002
Marion Twp., St. Theresa, St. Johns South, St. Johns North [cemeteries], Saginaw County
Michigan's German heritage: John Andrew Russell's history of the German influence in the making of Michigan
Sanilac County 1890 census substitute: Lexington, Sanilac and Worth townships
Sanilac County birth records 1867-1874, 1875-1877, 1889-1897
Sanilac County death records, 1898-1899
Sanilac County marriage index: 1849-1912, 1913-1920, 1917-1920
Sanilac County marriage records: 1870-1879, 1880-1885
Stilson Cemetery, 1997

New Hampshire

Poor relief in Durham, Lee and Madbury, 1732-1891

New York

Albany rural cemetery
Baptism record of Helderburg Reformed Church, Guilderland Center, Albany County, 1786-1860
Baptism record of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Albany, Albany County, 1827-1833, 1906-1923
Early Albany County deaths, 1654-1833
Early records of St. James Lutheran Church, Guilderland, Albany County, 1788-1872
Early records of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Albany, Albany County, 1828-1924
Early settlements in Dutchess County, New York
Marriage record of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Albany, Albany County, 1828-1833, 1906-1915, 1937-1950
Marriages from *The SaugertiesTelegraph*, 1871-1884
Town of Harrisburg: A history
Town of Wilmington, Essex County: Transcribed serial records, multiple vols.

Ohio

1890 births, marriages and deaths: Photo-copied from 1890 Meigs County newspapers
A brief history of the Cuyahoga River in Portage County to 1899
A brief history of the pioneers and early settlers of Streetsboro
A century of theatre at Wilmington College: A nostalgic history and scrapbook
American Civil War writings from the News-Letter, 1962-1972 [Portage County]
Ashland County birth records, 1867-1879
Athens County
Aviation in Columbus
Bedford and Bedford Township [Cuyahoga County]
Civil War soldiers from Summit County
Cleveland's greatest fighters of all time
Columbiana County probate abstracts, 1803-1830
Connecticut Western Reserve, State of Ohio, County of Portage timeline, 1669-2007
Cortland and Bazetta Township [Trumbull County]
Crosley field [Hamilton County]
Dayton aviation: The Wright Brothers to McCook Field
Descriptions of ancient works in Ohio
Doncaster Funeral Home, Hudson: December 31, 1903-April 7, 1910
Fifty years at Towner Mound [Portage County]
Franklin Township: Franklin Mills, Kent & general topics of interest from the News-Letter, 1962 – 1971
The Gustavus story: Bicentennial issue, 1976
History of Streetsboro Township and biographical sketches
Legends of the Hall, 1950s
Madisonville [Hamilton County]
Mantua, 1799-1909; Mantua homecoming 1946
Martinsville High School & etc. "Bits & Pieces" [Clinton County]
Mayor's court records of Hudson, Summit County
North Royalton [Cuyahoga County]
Norton Township cemeteries [Summit County]
Ohio Patriot abstracts, June 16, 1810 to December 27, 1866 [Columbiana County]
Orrville [Wayne County]
Portage County Historical Society News-Letter 1962-1965, 1965-1968, 1969-1971, 1972-1973
Origins, personalities & acquisitions from the News-Letter, 1962-1971 [Portage County]
Portage County maps, 1857: Villages, towns & communities
Portage County newspaper clippings, 1882-1888: Advertising, news & notices
Portage County timeline: A narrative companion, 1669-1899; 1900-1949
Portage County township maps, 1857
Salt Fork State Park
Shootin' the chutes: Amusement parks remembered
The Unitarian Universalist Church of Akron: 50 years on Morewood Road, 1961-2011
War of 1812 veterans buried in Summit County
Willoughby [Lake County]

Pennsylvania

30 Perry County cemetery records: Complete tombstone inscriptions
Along the Monongahela: A history of the early events along the Monongahela and its tributaries
Scottish dissenting Presbyterian churches in Allegheny County

Tennessee
Hickman County Bible-tombstone records
Index to Wilson County wills & administrations, 1802 to 1861
Lincoln County tombstone records
Loudon County tombstone records

Virginia
A finding list of Virginia marriage records before 1853
Historical notes on Amelia County
Ketron Memorial Gardens, annotated listing, Lebanon
Marriages of Amelia County, 1735-1815
Orange County will book, 2 vols. 1735-1743, 1744-1778
Russell County 1890 personal property tax list
Russell Memorial Cemetery, annotated listing, Lebanon
Temple Hill Memorial Park [Russell County]

West Virginia
Annals of Webster County, before and since organization, 1860
Clay County cemeteries
Clay County deaths: 1858-1901
Master index: Cemetery readings for Upshur County

Military
The 1861-1864 Civil War letters of General Erastus Barnard Tyler
1883 military pensioners: Updated index of Northeast Ohio
The untried life: The 29th Ohio Volunteer Infantry in the Civil War
A troopers [sic] scrap book: An album history of Troop G, 107th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Ohio National Guard

Native American
Applications for enrollment of Seminole Newborn Freedman (Act of 1905)

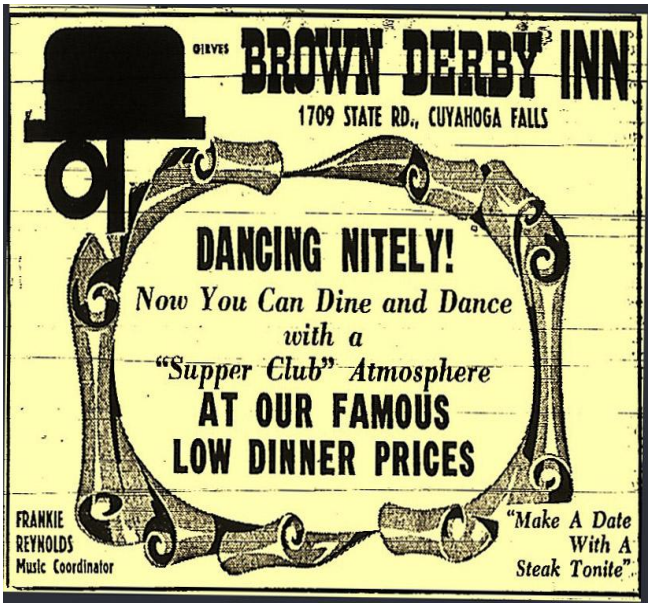
Reference
My history is America's history: 15 things you can do to save America's stories
Kinship: It's all relative

Wales
Pembrokeshire people: Llandewy (Llandewi) Velfrey, 1841 census
Pembrokeshire people: Llandewy (Llandewi) Velfrey, 1871 census

Family History
Adelle Bartlett Harper's family lines: A loving tribute to our southern heritage
All the way back: Genealogy of Rogers Bruce Johnson and Margery Ruth Howe
Descendants of William Robinson

New England
The Great Migration newsletter: Volumes 1-20 (1990-2011)

Bits & Bygones: Snippets from Another Era



Do you remember the Brown Derby Inn on State Road? This advertisement appeared in the Akron Beacon Journal *on February 3, 1966.*

HALL OF FAME
PE-RU-NA FOR WINTER CATARRH
PE-RU-NA
CONTAINS GOLDEN SEAL, CORYDALIS FORMOSA, CEDRON SEEDS, OIL OF COPAIBA, CUBEB BUDS, COLLINSONIA CANADENSIS, AND OTHER VALUABLE CATARRH REMEDIES
IT WILL HELP YOU
PE-RU-NA
FOR CATARRH IN ALL PARTS OF THE SYSTEM
RELIEVES COLDS, COUGHS, GRIP AND ALL CATARRHAL DISEASES.
Ask any fair-minded doctor and he will tell you that golden seal, cubebs and oil of copaiba (contained in Pe-ru-na) are valuable remedies in the treatment of catarrhal diseases. And every honest doctor will concede that collinsonia canadensis, corydalis formosa and cedron seed (contained in Pe-ru-na) are tonic remedies of high value. With this opinion all the leading medical text books agree.
Ask Your Druggist for Free Peruna Almanac for 1908

A curious remedy advertised in the Akron Beacon Journal*, January 11, 1908.*

The Akron-Summit County Public Library
Special Collections Division
is located on the third floor
of the Main Library.

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